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HEPPNER Gazette Times

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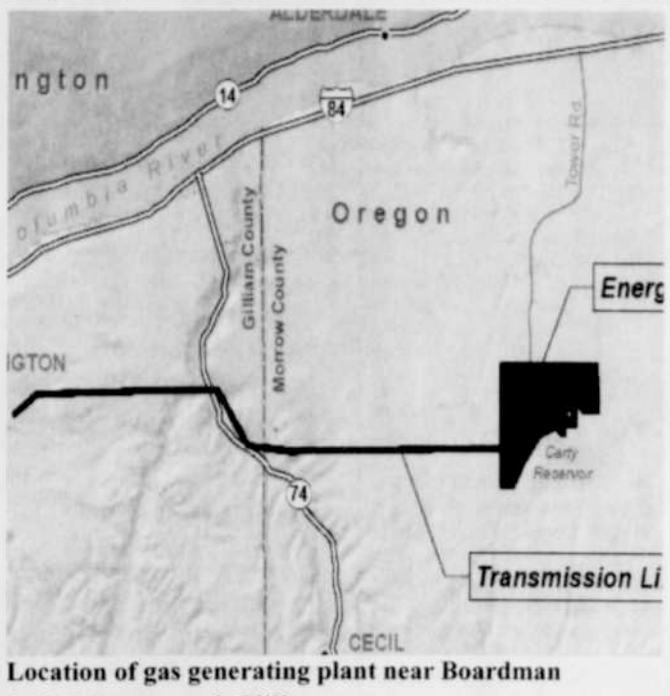
New wind farm & gas-fired facility planned

171 towers planned on 14,798 acres in Morrow & Gilliam Counties

By David Sykes

A new 171-tower wind farm and a gas fired generating plant are being planned for Morrow County.

The wind facility will be located on private land 20 miles south of the Columbia River between Eightmile Canyon and Highway 74 in both Morrow and Gilliam County.



Location of gas generating plant near Boardman

Called Saddle Butte Wind Park it has a generating capacity of 565 megawatts and will cover 14,798 acres of privately owned agricultural land, with 8,238 acres in Gilliam and 6,560 in Morrow County. The facility plans to connect at Bonneville Power Administration's Slatt Switching Station about 20 miles away.

Saddle Butte LLC submitted a notice of intent with the Oregon Energy Siting Council on August 7, 2009, and is now waiting for certification for the project.

The project is expected to employ approximately 250 workers during construction, and then have 25 permanent jobs upon completion.

Also on tap is a new gas-fired generating plant to be built next to the PGE coal-fired plant near Boardman.

This generating facility will produce 900 megawatts of electricity using natural gas from an existing pipeline operated by Gas Transmission Northwest Corporation located 15 to 25 miles to the south. The generator would use 150 million cubic feet of natural gas per day.

The plant will be located on about 55 acres of land near the Carty Reservoir about 15 miles from Boardman next to PGE's existing coal plant.

PGE submitted a letter of intent to build the plant with the Oregon Energy Siting Council on August 26. It is estimated that 20 people will be employed when the facility is operational.

New wind farm planned for Morrow & Gilliam Counties (shaded areas).

Health Department readies for H1N1 vaccine arrival

County Health officials say more H1N1 flu vaccine is on the way, they just don't know when it will get here.

Morrow County Public Health Director Sheree Smith says the new vaccine may arrive in two to three weeks and at that time her department will be going into every school in Morrow County to start the H1N1 immunizations. "As soon as vaccine arrives we will notify the schools. Information will be sent to parents along with consent forms." Smith said. "We will start with the grade schools first and work through the County to the High Schools. Those within the target groups are welcome to receive vaccination at all school clinics as well as at all regular Health Department Clinics. The majority of the vaccine is coming in the flu mist formulation. Therefore all healthy individuals aged 2-24 will be receiving this method of vaccination. "You cannot get the flu from the mist," Smith emphasized.

The target groups for H1N1 vaccination are:

1. Pregnant women
2. Household members and caregivers of infants less than 6 months of age.
3. Children 6 months through 24 years of age.
4. Persons age 25-64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of complications from influenza.
5. Healthcare workers and law enforcement.

Smith also gave some guidelines if someone does get the flu. People should stay home out of contact with other people so as not to spread the disease. They should rest and drink plenty of fluids. "Be alert for complications of the illness. Call a doctor right away if the ill person has:

1. Difficulty breathing/fast breathing
2. Has a bluish color to the skin or lips.
3. Begins coughing up blood.
4. Complains of pain or pressure in the chest.
5. Shows signs of dehydration and cannot take enough fluids.
6. Appears confused or does not respond appropriately.
7. Has convulsions.
8. Gets worse after appearing to improve.
9. Is an infant under 2 months old with fever, poor feeding, urinating less than 3 diapers a day or other signs of illness.

Otherwise just stay home and let it run its course," she said. "It may take three to five days to get through it." She said people who get sick should stay home 24 hours after their fever breaks without any fever reducing medications

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Garrett, Winters fill buck tags

Mayci Garrett of Heppner recently shot her first buck, a 3x4 taken from the Columbia Basin unit. *–Contributed Photo*

Former Heppner resident and current Bend resident Travis Winters shot this buck in the Heppner Unit. *–Contributed Photo*

The Heppner Gazette-Times wants to see pictures of your trophy animals from this hunting season. Stop by to have your picture taken, drop off photos, or email them to editor@rapidserve.net.

M.C. Public Works announces Rhea Creek road closure

According to Morrow County Public Works Director Burke O'Brien, due to paving on Rhea Creek, the section of Rhea Creek road from Highway 207 at Ruggs to the Junction of Sanford Canyon is closed to everything except local traffic. The closure began October 19 and will continue through October 30.

The primary detour route will be Basey Canyon, Sanford Canyon Route.

All traffic of any kind with the exception of those local residents will be restricted and the closure will be strictly enforced during this period.

Local residents will be allowed access subject to following traffic control measures necessary at the time.

This project is a Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Funding.

Ione School repairs nearing completion

By David Sykes

Repairs to the gym floor caused by flooding from an unfinished roof, are nearing completion, Ione Superintendent Karl Ostheller told the school board Monday night.

Ostheller said the floor had been replaced and the next step was sanding, painting and varnishing. In fact the night of the board meeting crews were working on sanding the gym floor. Ostheller said the floor was scheduled to be finished October 30 and to use on, or around, November 4.

The gym floor was brand new when it was damaged in August. The gym roof was also in the process of being replaced when a tarp came off during a storm causing severe water damage to the floor. At that time the project manager said that floor samples indicated significant readings of moisture in the wood and under the vapor barrier. Insurance will cover replacement of a new floor which is estimated to be around $81,000.

Ostheller also reported that flu has not seemed to hit the school too hard. "Generally we have had between five and ten percent of our students out for one reason or another, and of those about half are flu related," he said. He added they are teaching preventative measures to the children and staff, and doing extra cleaning around the school. He also said they are asking that parents keep their children at home for 24 hours after the fever has broken.

Ostheller said that now that the pool is shut down he has started to track water loss. The swimming pool had some problems with leakage and he has contacted contractors who he thinks should be able to take a look at the problem in the early part of November.

It was also reported that the district had signed labor contracts with both its teachers and classified employees. They are both one year agreements. The last contracts were five year agreements, but the board was told state wide contract lengths in school districts have been getting shorter.

In other business the board was given a slide show presentation of a biology and natural resource classes' recent field trip to Christmas Valley.

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MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.